Theft at Prime Minister's Special Aircraft

1491. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI SANJAY RAUT:
SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that theft occurred in Prime Minister's Special Aircraft, while his way back from a State visit to Berlin and Tashkent during 21st to 26 April, 2006;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Air-India has refused to furnish the contact details of the escorting officer to the investigation SPG team;

(c) whether it is a fact that, the civil Aviation Secretary has observed that the behavior of Air-India officers was cavalier and irresponsible in this matter and if so, what action the Ministry proposes to take against those officers; and

(d) what concrete action the Ministry propose to take against such security lapse for VVIP dignitaries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) When the VVIP flight carrying Hon'ble Prime Minister was about to take-off from Hanover for Berlin on the 24th of April, the Air India Flight Purser in charge of a bar cart on the upper deck of the plane, noticed that a plastic bar seal had been broken off and 6 bottles of liquor were missing.

(b) No, Sir. The escorting officer, who was on the VVIP flight, was constantly in touch with the SPG officials on flight itself.

(c) and (d) On coming to know of the incident, Secretary Civil Aviation took a serious view and had directed Air India to investigate the matter thoroughly. The matter is, accordingly, under investigation. However, as per a preliminary report the matter has not been found to be in the nature of a security lapse. Individual responsibility is being fixed and concerned staff and crew have been taken off from VVIP flight duties till further orders. Further, the process of selection of staff and crew for VVIP flights has been made more stringent.